No Country To Call Home

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No Country To Call Home

by Superblobby

Summary

In the chaos of the Second Nilfgaardian War, two soldiers from far different lands are forced to unite under strange circumstances.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

The Zerrikanian Fire Scorpion of Fate

July 9th, 1267

Aldersberg, Lower Aedirn

The chaos that unfolded in front of Draya was a sight to behold. All around her, soldiers were in a frenzy. Extinguishing fires, manning the volleys. She was practically blind, the smokes of the countryside set a dark fiery plume through the sky. The sun hadn't shone in days, fires ravaged as far as the eye could see. Draya was stationed on a tower in the merchant's district. She was the only soldier amongst the few merchants who didn't flee the city. She knew many of them would die. Brave fools they were.

"ALRIGHT! LISTEN UP!"

Draya stood on a barrel, making her tall frame tower over the merchants.

"THOSE PLOUGHIN' NILFGAARDIAN WHORES HAVE BEEN HITTING US ALL DAY WITH THEIR FIRE SCORPIONS."

Another blast rattled the wall behind them, many of the merchants ducked down, others screamed loudly. None of them deserted.

"OUR WALLS ARE THE BEST IN THE NORTH, BUT WE CAN ONLY GET PUMMELED LIKE THIS FOR SO LONG. OUR TASK IS TO ELIMINATE THOSE BLOODY SIEGE MACHINES."

Draya let out a rallying cry, only a few merchants screamed back. The small group was ready to charge up the walls. Draya stepped down from the barrel and unsheathed her sword. Yet, before she could even step foot on the stairs, a green hurtling ball of fire smashed into the guild office behind them. The flames engulfed the merchants, they didn't even have time to react. All that remained was Draya. She brushed the soot out of her Warriors Plait. She knew Aldersberg was a lost cause.

Draya listened intently to the drummers, making out their code through the crackling flames.

CITY IS LOST, EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF

All around her, the cries of Nilfgaardian warriors rang. Draya had to hide, and fast. The only way out seemed to be the sewers. She ran to the fortress walls, there's always an entrance in the walls. Upon entering, the stench of blood was overwhelming. Above her, the shuffling of boots and screams of Nilfgaardian Tongue ran out. The screams of mercy that the Nilfgaardians vehemently ignored would haunt Draya the rest of the day...She had grown indifferent to the slaughter.

Winding through the castle walls, she had deftly avoided the Nilfgaardian's. The entrance to the sewers lay below her. She unsheathed her sword, there would be drowners awaiting her below. She'd rather die by a drowners claws than be executed by a cackling Blackclad. She paused and looked around her before opening the manhole. This split-second decision changed her fate, one could say it even saved Draya's life. Though, that didn't seem to be the case at first.

In front of her stood a Nilfgaardian, short and stout, a clean sword in hand. Draya didn't have time to surmise why the man's sword lacked Aedirnian blood. She was not about to be his first.

Draya parried the first blow. She was ready to slash soldiers stomach, anger still seething from the Brothers-in-Arms the Black Ones mercilessly killed. She never got to exact justice. Draya and the Blackclad were interrupted by the Zerrikanian Fire Scorpion that would determine their fate.

In the Ruins of Aedirn

Chapter Summary

> With the Blackclads pushing North, and the Aedirnian's retreating to Vengerberg, Draya and the Nilfgaardian awaken in the ruins of abandoned land.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

July 12th, 1267

Aldersberg, Lower Aedirn

The placid quiet of Aldersberg that Draya awoke to was unsettling. She sat up straight in her bed, sunlight streaming through the window. Surveying the room, she noticed it was an apothecary's building, she slept in the upstairs bedroom of the owner. Who was nowhere to be found. The walls were lined with shelves of herbs and vials, some of them imported from Vicovaro. The floor was covered in shattered glass and strewn recipes. The sunlight hitting Draya's face was solely accredited to the gaping hole in the northern wall.

Draya turned her attention to the corner of the room. The Nilfgaardian sat in a rocking chair, helmet removed, writing in a journal. He hadn't even noticed Draya awaken until he brushed back his dirty, black hair.

"You're finally awake, Nordling."

The Nilfgaardian closed his notebook, stuffing it into his armor. He stood up, making Draya search for her sword. The Nilfgaardian pointed to her bedside, where her sword lay. Before the Aedirnian Warrior could reach for it, the Blackclad spoke.

"Wait, Nordling."

Draya jumped out of bed, unsheathing her sword.

"WHY SHOULD I?! YOU TOOK EVERYTHING FROM ME!"

The man held up his sword, blades clashing for the first time. Draya yelled through gritted teeth.

"YOU TOOK MY COUNTRY!"

The Nilfgaardian stood defensively, not swinging back at any of her blows.

"GIVE ME A REASON I SHOULDN'T KILL YOU TOO?"

The Soldier grunted an answer, using all his strength to stop Draya's Mahakaman Steel.

"I'm...*ergh*...not...a Nilfgaardian."

This statement astonished Draya. How could he not be a Nilfgaardian? Why did he save her from the rubble? In the heat of the moment, she released her sword, letting it drop from her sweaty palms. The Nilfgaardian...or not, sheathed his sword. The man sat down next to Draya. Heaving from their fight just seconds earlier.

"My-my name is Drago Gwen'yll Aep Far'dhal, and I was conscripted from Gheso. A land once conquered by the Nilfgaardians. I've been waiting for an opportunity to defect from the moment this war started. When I separated myself from my division, I was going to crawl into the sewers. Possibly even find some corpse to steal clothes from."

Drago laughed, "That didn't go according to plan. It took me a while to dig you out of the rubble, but I managed to drag you up here. I've made do with the leaves this bloke left behind. It's been three days since the rubble got us, The Blackclads push north...Yet here we are."

Draya stared at Drago, she ran her hand through her Warrior's Plait. She wiped away the soot and ash that stained her hair. Drago spoke once again.

"Nordling, I wish to serve the North. In any way possible, I want to fight for a land free of Nilfgaard. It is too late for my homeland, but not for this Realm."

The Warrior simply nodded in response.

"Say, Nordling, I never got your name. Would you do me the honor-"

"It's Draya, I served the Aldersberg Garrison...Before it collapsed, that is."

Drago extended his arm for a handshake, Draya shook it.

"Nice to meet you Draya, I believe I should get out of this armor."

Draya dryly laughed in response.

"Yes, Drago, and I believe we should get out of this city too."

Chapter End Notes

Soooooo, after a very long time, I'm starting this series up again. I finally have enough free time with Summer coming up. I'll continue writing this story and see where it goes

:)

One Last Stop

Chapter Summary

The duo makes one last pit stop in Aldersberg

July 13th, 1267

Drago and Draya departed the city of Aldersberg, both of them wearing an Aedirnian army uniform. Drago somehow managed to find a recruitment center chock full of uniforms for blokes of Drago's stature. The two continued their walk down the streets of Aldersberg. The walk was silent, up until a smirk began to grow on Draya's face. The stout Ghesoian took notice.

"What's so funny, Draya?"

"I just realized that your uniform is spotless. There's no way a Sergeant would believe you came from bloody *Aldersberg*."

"Well then, what would you suggest we do about it?"

The Aedirnian Warrior looked down to Drago.

"Roll around in the mud, smear some blood, there's plenty."

"Didn't take you for a poet, Nordling."

Drago nonchalantly rolled into a swampy pool. He was getting filthy. Draya folded her arms over her breastplate, patiently waiting for Drago to finish. When Drago finished, he walked up to Draya.

"This filthy enough?"

The Warrior examined Drago, taking in a whiff of his uniform.

"Mhm, you're go-"

Draya was interrupted by Drago pulling her into the mud. Her armor rattled as she sunk into the pool.

"You seemed a bit too clean!"

Drago exclaimed, scooping up some dirt to throw at Draya. He would instead receive a volley from Draya.

"And you're not dirty enough!"

For the first time since the war began, Draya laughed. In fact, it was the probably the first time since 1266 that she laughed. In those few minutes slinging mud balls at the foreigner that she tried to kill mere days ago. She managed to forget, for a fraction of a moment, the hell that was around her. Aldersberg in ruins, the Black Ones marching in Vengerberg, the death and destruction yet to come. She had thrown it all to hell, in a barrage of muddy projectiles.

One Hour Later

The walk to the outer walls had become far more pleasant. Drago and Draya were engaging in small talk now. One could say they were possibly warming up to each other. They swapped tales of home, talked of foods that they wanted to eat. Anything to pass the time until they reached the gates, which they now stood before. The duo looked forward, together they departed the city. Not looking back once.

Gameplan

Chapter Summary

> As Drago and Draya make their way north, they encounter another foe...One in Northern Banners.

The Dyphne Forest, July 20th, 1267

The duo sat huddled around a campfire, both of them wrapped in a Deerskin they bought from a desperate fur trader. The Florins that Drago had stuffed in his sole were sufficient enough. Northern Patriotism vanished with the rattle of a few coins. They had made phenomenal time, tomorrow they were set to cross into Northern Aedirn. Their goal was the fortress city of Gulet. Drago broke the silent staring contest with the fire.

"Draya, can you tell me about your home?"

She was too mesmerized by the fire to hear him.

"DRAYA!"

The trance was snapped in an instant.

"Whaddya want?"

Drago spoke again.

"I would like to know about your life...in the Northern Realms."

Draya let out a sigh, what on the Continent could this Nilfgaardian sop want to know about her home? Her people were well in the process of being enslaved by Nilfgaardian Drivers. As has happened with every land conquered by them.

"What the hell could you want to know about...this?"

Draya undid her plait, gesturing for Drago to ask away.

"Well, er, when I was in Academy, I was told that our rival was Oxenfurt. Have you ever been there? I want to go to Oxenfurt somed-"

Draya was trying to get the mud and soot out of her hair, she interrupted irritably.

"Never been, farthest north I've ever been was Ban Gleán."

"Oh! Can you tell me about Kaedwen?"

Draya had never seen someone so enthusiastic to learn about the Northern Realms, she indulged Drago.

"Ban Gleán is a beautiful city, you should see it at night. The whole city adheres to the tradition of 'Vac'ren Va'."

"Vac'ren Va...we do that in Gheso too. Though only when imperial legions march through."

"It was invented in Ban Gleán, long ago an elven brigade was gonna pass through the city. The Garrison Commander at the time hatched a plan for an ambush. All the lights in the city were extinguished. The Kaedweni lay in ambush for an attack, the Elves were prepared for an attack at any moment. However, it was said the night sky was so beautiful that both sides dropped their weapons. Simply looking at the night sky instead. When morning came, both sides honorably departed from each other. The name was adopted when an Elf called the night sky 'Vac'ren Va'. Lights Out in common tongue. We adhere to it, so long as the Garrison approves of it."

Drago was infatuated with the history that Draya told. Noticing this, she went on to tell of the city.

"I was raised in Ban Gleán after my parents died. My Uncle was a blacksmith in the Merchant Quarter. I'll never forget my first night when he brought me to the roof and we watched Vac'ren Va. It's something I'll never forget, Drago. He lost his son a year past, in a military training accident. When we were sitting on that roof, the pains of the past were gone. I forgot about my dead parents, all I could see was the stars. The next year was the best year of my life, 1261. I was enrolled in school, but the exciting part of the day was when my Uncle would finish working. No matter how exhausted he seemed. My smile would always make his day. We'd cook dinner, or go for walks. July was my favorite month, the summer nights would bring the city to a halt. We'd eat with haste to watch the sunset, and then it was Vac'ren Va."

Her tone turned serious instantaneously.

"Drago...If you ever go to Ban Gleán, I'm coming with you."

"Yes, of course. You should get some sleep."

"But it's-"

"You need some rest, I can stay up. Trust me."

Draya didn't argue, she gladly nestled into her Deerskin blanket. Drago could've asked her why she would leave behind such a life, but he loved her too much to put her through that.

End Notes

Not much to say about this chapter, this is taking place shortly after Nilfgaard crosses the Yaruga.

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